

REMARKS

I. FORMAL MATTERS

Claims 1-3 and 6 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 6 are the pending independent claims. Claims 4 and 5 were canceled in a previous response.

The drawings are objected to under 37 CFR 1.83(a). Applicants note that an amended drawing of Fig. 17 (a perspective view of a medal tray 50) was submitted with the response filed on Nov. 20, 2009. Applicants submit herewith a copy of the replacement sheet of amended Fig. 17 for the Examiner's convenience. Applicants further submit that paragraph 0029 of the specification and the medal ejection port 53b shown in Fig. 18 (a cross-section view of a medal tray 50), for example, disclose the position and shape of the medal ejection port 53b shown in amended Fig. 17. Accordingly, Applicants submit that no new matter is being added by amended Fig. 17. Applicants therefore respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to Fig. 17.

II. 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) REJECTIONS

Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by JP 2003-024512 to Keiji (hereinafter Keiji). Applicants respectfully traverse.

The Office Action alleges that Keiji discloses each of the elements of independent claims 1 and 6. Applicants respectfully disagree. Keiji is at least deficient with regards to the protrusion portion of claims 1 and 6 of the present invention. Specifically, Keiji fails to disclose at least the element of claims 1 and 6 that recites:

the protrusion portion is tapered in the vertical direction from a base portion joined to the rear wall toward a tip, and disposed between a medal

ejection port and the bottom wall so that medals ejected from the medal ejection port fall on a tapered portion of the protrusion portion, and wherein the protrusion portion extends across the entire width of the rear wall.

The Office Action alleges that the separation promoting portion 25c of Keiji corresponds to the protrusion portion of the instant application. However, Keiji merely discloses that the separation acceleration part 25c prevents medals from adhering to the back wall part. See Keiji translation, ¶¶ [0005], [0027]-[0028]). Moreover, Keiji is silent as to both the function and the orientation of the separation promoting portion 25c (alleged protrusion portion recited in claims 1 and 6 of the instant application). For example, Keiji fails to disclose how the separation promoting portion is positioned such that it is “disposed between a medal ejection port and the bottom wall” and “extends across the entire width of the rear wall.” Keiji also fails to disclose that “medals ejected from the medal ejection port fall on a tapered portion of the protrusion portion” as recited in claims 1 and 6.

Thus, the separation promoting portion 25c of Keiji fails to anticipate each and every element of claims 1 and 6, specifically the protrusion portion of the present invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) rejection of claims 1 and 6, and further request allowance of the same.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) REJECTIONS

Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Keiji. Applicants respectfully traverse.

Applicants do not acquiesce to the Examiner's characterization of Keiji relative to claims 2 and 3. Furthermore, Applicants note that claims 2 and 3 depend from claim 1. Thus, in view of the arguments above with respect to claim 1, at least because of their dependency on claim 1, Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 2 and 3.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims define patentable subject matter over the cited art, considered alone or in combination, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the number below should a telephone interview be helpful in expediting the prosecution of this application.

Applicant believes that no additional fees are due at this time. However, the director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith (or with any paper hereafter filed in this application by this firm) to our Deposit Account No. 04-1105, under Order No. 86230(308246) US in order to have this paper entered and considered.

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Respectfully submitted,

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